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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/689,008	10/20/2003	Michael Schutz	22750/455A	4107
27572	7590	09/28/2005	EXAMINER	
HARNES, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C. P.O. BOX 828 BLOOMFIELD HILLS, MI 48303			TORRES, MELANIE	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3683	

DATE MAILED: 09/28/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/689,008

Applicant(s)

SCHUTZ, MICHAEL

Examiner

Melanie Torres

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 September 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3,7 and 14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3,7 and 14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1, 2, 11 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kawaura et al.

Re claims 1 and 14, Kawaura et al. disclose a spring strut support bearing, comprising a top bearing having an inner ring (24) by way of which the top bearing can be affixed to the end of a piston rod (14) of a shock absorber connected to a vehicle body (16); an outer ring (28) surrounding the inner ring with radial clearance defining a gap therebetween, the outer ring being stationary with respect to the vehicle body; at least one elastic spring element (26) made of rubber-elastic material located in the gap formed by the clearance; wherein the inner ring has two end faces, on each of which has at least one elastically flexible stop buffer (30, 32) for limiting extreme deflection movements along a deflection direction defined by the motion of a shock absorber, each of the stop buffers having the capability of being brought into contact with counter stop faces (on elements 18 and 20), a central hole of each annular stop buffer arranged to receive the piston rod therethrough and the outer ring is press fit in a generally cylindrical portion joined to the vehicle body. (Figure 3). Kawaura et al. do not teach

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the stop buffer of one end face substantially symmetric to the stop buffer of the other end face about a middle plane between one end face and the other end face. It would have been an obvious matter of design choice to modify Kawaura et al. by having symmetric stop buffers since applicant has not disclosed that having symmetric stop buffers solves any stated problem or is for any particular purpose and it appears the strut would perform equally well with a variety of stop buffer shapes. It has been held that a change in shape is an obvious matter of design choice which a person of ordinary skill in the art would have found obvious absent persuasive evidence that the particular configuration of the claimed container was significant. See MPEP 2144.04, IV. B. (In re Dailey, 357 F. 2d 669, 149 USPQ 47 (CCPA 1966))

Re claim 2, Kawaura et al. disclose wherein the stop buffers (30, 32) and the elastic spring element (26) are formed in one piece and of the same material.

3. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawaura et al.

Re claim 3, Kawaura et al. teach wherein the stop buffers are connected to the end face of the inner ring. However, Kawaura et al. do not teach wherein the stop buffers are produced separately and connected frictionally and/or with form locking to the respective end face of the inner ring. Even though product-by-process claims are limited by and defined by the process, determination of patentability is based on the product itself. The patentability of a product does not depend on its method of

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production. If the product in a product-by-process claim is the same as or obvious form a product of the prior art, the claim is unpatentable even though the prior art was made by a different process. See *In re Thorpe*, 777 F.2d 695, 698, 277 USPQ 964, 966 (Fed. Cir. 1985) and MPEP 2113. Therefore, while the mechanical limitations have been considered, the process limitations have not.

4. Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawaura et al. in view of Knable et al.

Re claim 7, Kawaura et al. do not teach wherein stop buffers are made of cellular polyurethane. Knable et al. teach a spring support (40) made of cellular polyurethane. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have made the buffers from cellular polyurethane to provide for dissipating jounce energy during motions of the strut.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-3, 7 and 14 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Melanie Torres whose telephone number is (571)272-7127. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 6:30 AM - 4:00 PM.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Charles Marmor can be reached on (571)272-7095. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

MT
September 26, 2005

Melanie Torres
Melanie Torres
Primary Examiner
9-26-05